(c) and (d) The objectives for which the exercise was undertaken have been achieved.

Complications in the Way of Acquisition of weapons

514. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on defence opinion that complications arc coming in the way of acquisition of weapons a high level Committee was appointed by Government.

(b) if so, the findings of such a Committee;

(c) whether Government have implemented its recommendations;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (e)The Govcrnmcnl had set up a Committee in march 2000 headed by the Vice Chief of the Army Staff (VCOAS) to suggest further streamlining of defence procurement procedure to ensure the twin objectives of accountability and expediency. In the meantime, the Government on 17th May, 2000 appointed the Task Force for review of the Management of Defence. This task Force was, *inter-alia,* mandated to recommend such organizational and other changes as considered appropriate to bring about improvements in the procurement process. The VCOAS had made a presentation before the Task Force. After considering the recommendation of the Task Force, the Government have approved creation of a separate dedicated institutional structure namely the Defence Procurement Board, which will undertake the entire gamut of procurement functions. This is expected to facilitate a higher degree of professionalism and cost effectiveness in the process and ensure closer participation by the armed forces in the entire process of decision-making.

Purchase of tanks, Warships from Russia

515. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had placed huge contract for billions of dollars worth of T-90 tanks, warships and sophisticated SO-30MKI attack figters to

refurbish and re-equip the Admiral Gorshkov, a Soviet-era aircraft carrier and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government's attention had been drawn to the statement made by Pavel Felgenhauer, a leading Russian Defence analyst to that effect the Gorshkov is suitable only as a helicopter carrier have never been tested in a conventional aircrafts; and

(c) if so, Government's reaction in regard thereto and what are the conditions laid down by the Russian Government for the said offer?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI KRISHNAM RAJU): (a) No, Sir. However, a contract for import of T-90S tanks and for the Transfer to Technology (TOT) for indigenous construction of these tanks was signed in February, 2001. In addition, an agreement for the licensed production of SU-30MKI aircraft in India was signed in December, 2000. No contract for warships has been signed with Russia during the last three years.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The Government of the Russian federation have offered to gift the aircraft carrier "Admiral Gorshkov' to India. The Detailed Project Document (DPD) has been prepared by the Russian Side. An investment decision on the acquisition of "Admiral Gorshkov' has not yet been taken.

Scientific disposal of military hospitals waste

516. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to implement the World Health Organisation's recommendations on scientific disposal of hospital waste in all Military Hospitals;

(b) the number of Military Hospitals in the country and number of hospitals in which these recommendations would be implemented during the current yar; and

(c) the other details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a)Yes, Sir,

(b)There are 127 military hospitals in the country. During current year the